FAIR SHADOW LAND

BY EDITH M THOMAS

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BY

EDITH M. THOMAS

"Partem aliquam, venti, divûm referatis ad aures"

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TO DR. S. R. ELLIOTT

FAIR SHADOW LAND.

Fair Shadow Land that beckoning gleams
Beyond the twofold gate of dreams,
Whence glide a murmuring wizard crew!
Some were but false I deemed most true,
And some were true I counted vain;
Some fled the day, and some remain.
Fond dreamer, whosoe'er thou be,
Have not thy dreams been such to thee?

Yet, true or false, they are the friends
Fair Shadow Land in pity lends—
For dreams are charms to sheathe the steel
Of all we here too keenly feel!
At the white gate the visions crowd,
Crying, with voices sweet, not loud,
"Lo! thy deliverance is at hand—
We bring it from Fair Shadow Land!"

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I

IN DIVERS TONES

FAIR SHADOW LAND

A LEGEND OF THE WINDS

A LEGEND of the winds. Euroclydon,
That driveth from the bitter Thracian shore,
Brings this: "What deeds the sea and I have done,
This passing night, will make men murmur sore;
The deep, that hath already goodly store
Of jewels and wrought gold and coinèd gold,
Hath gathered through his sunken secret door
A largess richer by a thousand-fold, —
Great perished lives — and this is all that shall be told."

A legend of the winds. The herald West,
That haileth from the sea beyond the straits,
Brings this: "Long, long and vexed hath been their quest
Who seek the lands before the sunset gates;
But peace shall soon betide those tossed shipmates.
A glad green shore the morning light will show,

And sacred trees shall yield them oil and dates.
There waving meads men neither reap nor sow;
There amaranth and asphodel together blow."

A legend of the winds. Septentrio keen
(That bloweth through the sky a phantom fire;
Whose plumes are lances felt, though all unseen)
Brings this: "Three weavers have the gods in hire
To weave you well the garb of your desire.
With days and powers and all delights are fed
Their distaffs feeding still the swift wheel's gyre;
On the land's verge they sit and draw the thread —
On the white shore where none is living, none is dead!"

A legend of the winds. The idle South
(That singeth old, remembered songs most dear,
As who within a dream lifts to his mouth
A mellow reed, and yet no sound doth hear)
Brings this: "All through the bounteous golden year
Are flowers and fruit together on the boughs:
Song hath a pleasant tentage there, anear
A deep, sweet stream, where many come with vows,
And all are crowned with cooling green upon their brows."

THE REED SHAKEN WITH THE WIND

"Vex not thou the poet's mind."

Vex not that impassioned soul
Whereupon all issues roll,
Fraught with joy or fraught with woe,
That our common lot may know.
Nay, but as thou canst, assuage
The burden of his heritage;
For there live within his breast
Memory, foresight, all unrest,
Whether pain or pleasure hold
The heart's recesses manifold.
Sooner torrent from the steep
Midway shall be charmed asleep
Than his spirit's mobile tide
In a flawless calm abide.
Sooner shall the fires be dead,
In the earth's dark centre bred,
Than his deep and glowing heart
With its constant fervor part.
Sooner shall the whisper light
Die from off the poplar's height,
When the air is still below,
Than his soul no quickening know
From the winds that breathe abroad,
Mute save to this child of God.

More than its own joy and pain
Shall this heart of hearts constrain,
For as chords unstruck respond
With mysterious tremblings fond,
When their fellow chords are swept,
So it is with Heaven's adept.
Loved and lover if he meet,
Quick as theirs his pulses beat;
And the mourner, treading slow,
Uncompanioned shall not go;
Yet forever youth and mirth
Claim him nearest kin on earth.
No indifferent hour betides
Him with whom all Life divides.
Vex him not, and he will be
Voice unto thy mystery.
When thy thought thou canst not name,
He will tell from whence it came.
Things most sweet and fugitive
Will to him their errand give;
Morning dreams that smile through tears,
Sunset rays from sunken years,
And the morrow's haunting call —
He can name these each and all.
Bring thy loves, thy sorrows bring,
These he shall divinely sing;
But thy hates thou shalt withhold,
Lest those strings of magian gold
With the stress of anger break,
Or but muted chords awake!

THE TORCHES OF THE DAWN

Beneath the rough, black verge where ledgy isle
And serried wave and fragment cloud are hurled,
Swift through the underworld —
Lo where the torchmen of the Dawn defile!

Unseen they march beneath the rough, black verge,
Unseen, save from the torches which they bear,
Smoke and a crimson flare,
Wind-blown one way, show where their course they urge!

THEFTS OF THE MORNING

Bind us the Morning, mother of the stars
And of the winds that usher in the day!
Ere her light fingers slide the eastern bars,
A netted snare before her footsteps lay;
Ere the pale roses of the mist be strown,
Bind us the Morning, and restore our own!

With her have passed all things we held most dear,
Most subtly guarded from her amorous stealth;

We nothing gathered, toiling year by year,
But she hath claimed it for increase of wealth;
Our gems make bright her crown, incrust her throne:
Bind us the Morning, and restore our own!

Where are they gone, who round our myrtles played,
Or bent the vines' rich fruitage to our hands,
Or breathed deep song from out the laurels' shade?
She drew them to her; who can slack the bands?
What lure she used, what toils, was never known:
Bind us the Morning, and restore our own!

Enough that for her sake Orion died,
Slain by the silver Archer of the sky —
That Ilion's prince amid her splendors wide
Lies chained by age, nor wins his prayer to die;
Enough! but hark! our captive loves make moan:
Bind us the Morning, and restore our own!

We have beheld them whom we lost of old,
Among her choiring Hours, in sorrow bowed.
A moment gleam their faces, faint and cold,
Through some high oriel window wreathed with cloud,
Or on the wind before her they are blown:
Bind us the Morning, and restore our own!

They do her service at the noiseless looms
That weave the misty vesture of the hills ;
Their tears are drink to thirsting grass and
blooms,
Their breath the darkling wood-bird wakes and
thrills ;
Us too they seek, but far adrift are thrown :
Bind us the Morning, and restore our own !

Yea, cry her *Thief!* from where the light doth
break
To where it merges in the western deep !
If aught of ours she, startled, should forsake,
Such waifs the waiting Night for us will keep.
But stay not ; still pursue her, falsely flown :
Bind us the Morning, and restore our own !

SOLSTICE

In the month of June, when the world is green,
When the dew beads thick on the clover spray,
And the noons are rife with the scent of hay,
And the brook hides under a willow screen ;
When the rose is queen, in Love's demesne,
Then, the time is too sweet and too light to
stay :
Whatever the sun and the dial say,
This is the shortest day !

In the month of December, when, naked and keen,
The treetops thrust at the snow-cloud gray,
And frozen tears fill the lids of day;
When only the thorn of the rose is seen,
Then, in heavy teen, each breath between,
We sigh, "Would the winter were well away!"
Whatever the sun and the dial say,
This is the longest day!

DEAD LOW TIDE

It is dead low tide, and the wasted sea beats far;
Up from the caves of the underworld slowly climb
Night and her shadows unconquered from eldest time!
The cry of the sea-bird is hushed on the glimmering bar,
And the beach, with its strewing of dulse, is lonely and wide:
It is dead low tide.

The rocks are divulged, that hidden and cruel lie,
Under the waves in wait, as the beast in its lair!
Huge and harmless they shoulder the dusk night air;
A lighthouse gleams — they are charmed by its sorcerous eye!

The rocks are uncovered, and many a wreck beside :
It is dead low tide.

Not now shall the willing keel slip down to the sea,
Not now shall the home-desiring bark come home ;
The rocking surge is a dream, and the flying foam,
And the sails that over the windy billows roam —
A dream ! for the sea is gone, and the wind has died :
It is dead low tide.

There is rest from motion, from toil ; yet it is not rest !
The sounds of the land and the sea-sounds falter and cease ;
The wave is at peace with the shore ; yet it is not peace !
As the soldier at truce, as the pilgrim detained on his quest,
Baffled and silent, yet watchful, all things abide
The turn of the tide.

I too abide. To the spirit within responds
The baffled yet watchful spirit of all things without.

"Shall I rest forever, beleaguered by sloth and doubt?"
"Not so; thou shalt rise and break the enchanted bonds,
And the limit that mocked thee with laughter shalt override
At turn of the tide!"

Still higher the Night ascends, and star upon star
Arises by low-lying isle, and by headland steep,
And fathoms with silver light the slumbering deep. . . .
Hark! was it a lapsing ripple along the bar?
Hark! was it the wind that awoke, remembered, and sighed?
Is it turn of the tide?

IT SO CHANCED

It so chanced
On that leaden-hearted day,
Rugged winter leagues away,
As he thought of her there came
On the waste a sunny flame
Wherewithin the frost-mote danced,
While an echo rang her name.
It so chanced.

It so chanced
On that evening bleak and hard,
Martial-couched on frozen sward,
As he thought of her there crept
Music down the blast, that kept
All his senses dream-entranced,
While, from ambush watched, he slept.
It so chanced.

It so chanced
In that twilight winged with ill,
When his piercèd heart stood still,
As he dreamed of her, he passed!
Then, from out the circling Vast,
With a smile his love advanced —
"I, to meet thee, have sped fast!"
It so chanced.

(THEY SAID)

Because thy prayer hath never fed
Dark Atë with the food she craves;
Because thou dost not hate (they said),
Nor joy to step on foemen's graves;
Because thou canst not hate, as we,
How poor a creature thou must be,
Thy veins as pale as ours are red!
Go to! Love loves thee not (they said).

Because by thee no snare was spread
To baffle Love — if Love should stray,
Because thou dost not watch (they said),
To strictly compass Love each way:
Because thou dost not watch, as we,
Nor jealous Care hath lodged with thee,
To strew with thorns a restless bed —
Go to! Love loves thee not (they said).

Because thy feet were not misled
To jocund ground, yet all infirm,
Because thou art not fond (they said),
Nor dost exact thine heyday term:
Because thou art not fond, as we,
How dull a creature thou must be,
Thy pulse how slow — yet shrewd thy head!
Go to! Love loves thee not (they said).

Because thou hast not roved to wed
With those to Love averse or strange,
Because thou hast not roved (they said),
Nor ever studied artful change:
Because thou hast not roved, as we,
Love paid no ransom rich for thee,
Nor, seeking thee, unwearied sped.
Go to! Love loves thee not (they said).

Ay, so! because thou thought'st to tread
Love's ways, and all his bidding do,
Because thou hast not tired (they said),
Nor ever wert to Love untrue:

Because thou hast not tired, as we,
How tedious must thy service be ;
Love with thy zeal is surfeited !
Go to ! Love loves thee not (they said).

Because thou hast not wanton shed
On every hand thy heritage,
Because thou art not flush (they said),
But hast regard to meagre Age :
Because thou art not flush, as we,
How strait thy cautious soul must be,
How well thy thrift stands thee in stead !
Go to ! Love loves thee not (they said).

And therefore, look thou not for bread —
For wine and bread from Love's deep store,
Because thou hast no need (they said) ;
But us he 'll feast forevermore !
Because thou hast no need, as we,
Sit in his purlieus, thou, and see
How with Love's bounty we are fed !
Go to ! Love loves thee not (they said).

A WORLD OF ROSES

She had a world of roses
For half a wondrous day.
It was the thorny season,
The summer far away.

From space unknown they rallied,
By rhythmic charm compelled;
Their faces pale or crimson
Close to her own they held.

She laughed amid her rose-guard, —
It was a merry rout,
That mocked the thorny season,
And shut its white face out.

Each rose its heart did open,
All tropic-rich and sweet;
Each rose-heart, kind and courtly,
With her own heart did beat.

Untouched by time or canker,
They fled, and left no trace.
And then the thorny season
Thrust in its blanchèd face.

Had she not wiselier chosen
For every day one rose,
Instead of this brief revel
From Elfland's garden-close?

Howe'er it be I know not;
This only will she say,
"I had my world of roses
For half a wondrous day!"

THE BETRAYAL OF THE ROSE

A WHITE rose had a sorrow —
And a strange sorrow!
For her sisters they had none,
As they all sat around her
Each on her feudal throne.
A strange sorrow
For one with no to-morrow,
No yesterday, to call her own,
But only to-day.

A white rose had a sorrow —
And a sweet sorrow!
She had locked it in her breast
Save that one outer petal,
Less guarded than the rest
(Oh, fond sorrow!),
From the red rose did borrow
Blushes, and the truth confessed
In the red rose's way!

THE DOMINO

I MET a pilgrim clothed in hodden gray;
E'er any greeting word I found to say,
He cried in accents masterful and stern,
"My name Indifference, I pray you learn,

Nor bar the way when I am passing by."
"You look like Love," quoth I.

I met a lording in a purple cloak
Most bravely garnished; yet like churl he spoke,
And bade me heed he came of courtly strain,
Somewhile called Pride, and otherwhile Disdain,
Whose favor none might hope to beg or buy.
"You look like Love," quoth I.

I met a wight arrayed in martial red,
And on his shield a heart shaft-bitten bled.
"I Anger am, I bear both sword and fire;
At my approach all men affrayed retire.
They forfeit life, who will not turn and fly!"
"You look like Love," quoth I.

I met a damsel, drooping-eyed and sad,
And like a holy sister she was clad.
Some cordial from a slender flask she poured,
And smiled, and bade me drink; — 't was Pity's hoard,
To succor wounded ones that else must die.
"You look like Love," quoth I.

I met a fugitive distraught, undone,
Who sometimes stayed for dread, and sometimes run.
Though lord of all that sweetest bards have sung,
Not one poor word supplied his halting tongue,

But all his soul he lavished in a sigh.
"So, you are Love!" quoth I.

RAIN AND FAIR WEATHER

Maiden, of old to old Hesperia came
A Grecian youth, revolving in his thought
The purport of the Voice at Delphi heard:
"Lay thou thy city's walls where thou shalt see
Rain and Fair Weather in the selfsame spot."
It was upon the ridge Tarentum laves
He paused and marveled at this pleasing sight:
A damsel in the loveliness of morn,
But over the sweet heaven of her face
Some lonely sorrow had compelled the veil
That April's fingers are most deft to weave,
Wronging the landscape and the skies of Spring
Only to lure and make us love them more.
Then said that youth (of no untutored heart,
In far Achaia blest with parting tears
And misty lovelight in regretting eyes) —
Then said that youth, "Here shall my city be;
For here I saw Fair Weather wed with Rain,
And Iris, of their happy union born."
Thence rose Crotona's walls, — there stand to-day.

Maiden, thus far 't is either truth or fable;
For the long lapsing Ages senile grow,
And babble idly of the World's wise youth —

Thus far 't is truth or fable, as thou wilt;
But this I speak is truth, upon whose pulse
Pressing the finger, all its sacred speech
Leaps clear in this live moment! wherefore I,
O Beauty, lay the walls of glorious hope
Upon this omen of thy dear dismay, —
Thy tranquil being shaken with quick tears,
And thou not so much hiding them, in sooth,
As thou dost struggle to keep back the ray
That shines beyond and through their crystal bar!
Be this warm love for me! Is it not so?
Silent, thou lendest hope; I build thereon;
And building, first will I inclose a shrine,
To hold in ever-blessed memory
This moment of thy blended tears and smiles.

THE BARRIER

The gate stood wide, and wide the door,
As on a thousand nights before,
And in their wonted threshold tryst
The lamplight and the moonlight kissed.
The room its welcoming graces wore,
As on a thousand nights before;
The soul of all that mansion bright
Sent out a voice into the night,
As on a thousand nights before.

What 's this? Across the open door
Some viewless threads, so silken fine,
Do challenge every pass of mine;
So silken fine, so airy light,
Yet stanch with cruel magic might!
There is no Arab cimeter
Can part such threads of gossamer,
Nor any storm can rend adrift,
Nor fire devour with tongues most swift.

Such silken courses stronger are
Than bolt on bolt, or forgèd bar,
More fell than lance of hedging guard,
Than dragon or the couchant pard;
For these at length a conqueror know,
Or opiate draught or steely blow;
Grown tired of leaguer and delay,
Love can by might put these away,
But Love no cunning weapon hath
To cleave the gossamer's viewless path.

Wide open stands the gate — the door,
As on a thousand nights before;
Yet I therethrough may pass no more,
As on a thousand nights before!

AUGURY

I

A HORSESHOE nailed, for luck, upon a mast:
That mast, wave-bleached, upon the shore was cast!
I saw, and thence no fetich I revered,
But safe, through tempest, to my haven steered.

II

The place with rose and myrtle was o'ergrown,
Yet Feud and Sorrow held it for their own.
A garden then I sowed without one fear, —
Sowed fennel, yet lived griefless all the year.

III

Brave lines, long life, did my friend's hand display.
Not so mine own; yet mine is quick to-day.
Once more in his I read Fate's idle jest,
Then fold it down forever on his breast.

AGAINST CHAMPIONS

Nay! Champions had I many, and unsought:
Valiant, and ignorant why they fought, they fought!
Each did in turn become my rooted foe;
Each found a vital mark, each dealt a blow!

Quick tears they dropped for me — those springs
congealed,
Never a later summer's touch unsealed;
Each balmed, at first my wounds — but long ago
Each found a vital mark, and dealt a blow!

So do not *thou!* Stand far and stanch, my
hope —
Far from dark strife, while with my foes I cope;
Shine as a star, the tossing seas above —
But come not as a champion — thou, my love!

LOSSES

Speed had not served, strength had not flowed
amain,
Heart had not braced me, for this journey's strain,
Had I foreseen what losses must be met;
But drooping losel was I never yet!

So rich in losses through long years I 've grown,
So rich in losses (and so proud, I own)
Myself I pity not, but only such
As have not had, nor therefore lost, so much.

Behind me ever grew a hungry Vast
Which travelers fear to face, but call the Past;
So much it won from me I can but choose
To exult that I 've so little left to lose.

When that shall go, as fain it is to go
(Like some full sail when winds of voyage blow),
At this late nick of time to murmur sore
Were idle, since so much I 've lost before !

So much I 've lost, lost out of hand — ah, yes !
But were that all, my fortune I could bless ;
For whensoever aught has slipped away,
Some dearer thing has gone to find the stray ;

And then, to find the finder loth or slow,
Yet dearer thing my wistful heart let go,
With hope like his whose glancing arrow gave
The clue to Pari-banou's palace-cave.

Perchance one loss the more, regains the whole,
Lost loves and faith and young delight of soul :
I 'm losing — what ? ah, Life, join thou the quest ;
It may be, to be lost, is not unblest !

A PARABLE OF HARVEST

WHAT hast thou in thy garner, husbandman ?
Good grain and fair.
Then what are these black seeds full ill to scan ?
Cockle and tare.

But tell me, O thou toil-bent husbandman,
How came they there ?

They would not rise before the winnowing fan,
Despite my care.

But how did spring the cockle, husbandman,
And how the tare,
Thy goodly land to plague? *Beneath a ban,*
I sowed them there.

Declare whence came the seed, old husbandman,
With truth declare!
The grain my fathers had not skill to fan,
Such fruit doth bear.

MENS SANA

In the hoary wine-cave's mirk
Genii of the vintage lurk, —
Potent genii shrewd and merry:
Burgundy and laughing Sherry,
Sweet Tokay and Muscatel,
That of flowers do taste and smell
(Fit to pledge with Ariel);
Cloying Port and blithe Champagne,
Greekish wines and wines of Spain, —
Jovial all, and all unsteady!
Subtle *liqueurs* strange and heady, —
Curaçoa and Anisette,
And Absinthe wooing to forget.
These besiege you as you fare

Groping from the upper air ;
Tap nor spigot do they ask
To set them free from hoopèd cask.
If you be an anchorite,
They will take your brain by sleight,
Enter with the breath you draw,
And each pore will be a flaw
To let in the vinous rout.
But if there you drink a bout,
While the winking candle-ray
Lights the wine upon its way,
And the ancient cellarer prates
Mellowly of names and dates, —
Of holitides when Bacchus bled,
Of revels and of revelers fled, —
If a pledge or two you quaff,
At these genii you may laugh,
For their cunning in your veins
Makes you proof to all their trains.

Prince, my counsel scan and muse ;
In this life of glimmering clues,
Where the wisest ofttimes slip,
Fare you not with unwet lip.
Drink you must the potion rife
Of the olden vintage Life ;
So shall you be more exempt,
When the juggling genii tempt,
Than the pale recluse whose cell
Harbors many a traitor fell.

Caution shall more peril meet
Than ardor borne on glowing feet.
Fiery spirit safe shall tent
Its own deathless element,
And the poet, mad from birth,
Is the sanest soul on earth!

FINALITIES

Gold can be but gold alone,
Midas' touch it cannot own;
For the lightning there 's no scath,
For the fire no flaming bath.
Canst thou clarify the light,
Or in darkness merge the night?
Add perfection to the sphere,
Fullness to the rounded year?
Chiefdom to the sea declare,
Freedom to the ranging air?

There is beauty past the power
Of the earth or skies to dower;
There is joy no ministrants
Can by fondest skill enhance;
There is pain too keen to feel
Wounding point of driven steel.
Who can siege the souls that dwell
In Sleep's meshy citadel?
Who to Love's estate can add
More than Love hath ever had,

Or from one Great Vast withhold
What drew thither from of old, —
Stint the hunger-bitten rage
That devours from age to age?

A FAR CRY TO HEAVEN

WHAT! dost thou pray that the outgone tide be
rolled back on the strand,
The flame be rekindled that mounted away from
the smouldering brand,
The past-summer harvest flow golden through
stubble-lands naked and sere,
The winter-gray woods upgather and quicken the
leaves of last year? —
Thy prayers are as clouds in a drouth; regard-
less, unfruitful, they roll;
For this, that thou prayest vain things, 't is a far
cry to Heaven, my soul, —
Oh, a far cry to Heaven!

Thou dreamest the word shall return, shot arrow-
like into the air,
The wound in the breast where it lodged be
balmed and closed for thy prayer,
The ear of the dead be unsealed, till thou whis-
per a boon once denied,
The white hour of life be restored, that passed
thee unprized, undescried! —

Thy prayers are as runners that faint, that fail,
within sight of the goal,
For this, that thou prayest fond things, 't is a far
cry to Heaven, my soul, —
Oh, a far cry to Heaven!

And cravest thou fondly the quivering sands shall
be firm to thy feet,
The brackish pool of the waste to thy lips be
made wholesome and sweet?
And cravest thou subtly the bane thou desirest, be
wrought to thy good,
As forth from a poisonous flower a bee conveyeth
safe food?
For this, that thou prayest ill things, thy prayers
are an anger-rent scroll;
The chamber of audit is closed, — 't is a far cry
to Heaven, my soul, —
Oh, a far cry to Heaven!

A FIRE OPAL

Iris dwells in thee and throws
Rays of leaf-green and of rose,
Limpid amber courseth through
Violet glooms of fading hue.

Opal, well surnamed of fire,
If some stranger should inquire

Whence thy swift caprices came, —
Morn-mist closing evening-flame, —
Do thou kindling answer bring,
Many-passioned lambent thing!
Say, with cosmic throe was born
All thy life of love and scorn,
Yet not chance but deathless law
Bred thy beauty from a flaw.
Speak thou, too, with perfect art,
For wild Genius' burning heart,
Whose perfection springs, like thine,
From some touch of scath divine.

SILVER AND GOLD

FAREWELL, my little sweetheart,
Now fare you well and free;
I claim from you no promise,
You claim no vows from me.
The reason why? — the reason
Right well we can uphold —
I have too much of silver,
And you 've too much of gold!

A puzzle, this, to worldlings,
Whose love to lucre flies,
Who think that gold to silver
Should count as mutual prize!
But I 'm not avaricious,
And you 're not sordid-souled;

I have too much of silver,
  And you 've too much of gold.

Upon our heads the reason
  Too plainly can be seen:
I am the Winter's bond-slave,
  You are the Summer's queen;
Too few the years you number,
  Too many I have told;
I have too much of silver,
  And you 've too much of gold.

You have the rose for token,
  I have dry leaf and rime;
I have the sobbing vesper,
  You, morning bells at chime.
I would that I were younger,
  (Yet you grew never old) —
Would I had less of silver,
  But you no less of gold!

IN ONE'S AGE TO ONE'S YOUTH

Listen, thou child I used to be!
  I know what thou didst fret to know —
Knowledge thou couldst not lure to thee,
  Whatever bribe thou wouldst bestow.
That knowledge but a waymark plants
Along the road of ignorance.

Listen, thou child I used to be!
I am enlarged where thou wert bound,
Though vaunting still that thou wast free,
And lord of thine own pleasure crowned.
True freedom heeds a hidden stress,
Whereby desire to range grows less.

Listen, thou child I used to be!
Unmoved I meet thy fear of old,
Where thou, but masked with bravery,
Didst ever charge thyself, *Be bold!*
True courage owns a dread extreme —
Led blind through the blind battle's scheme!

Listen, thou child I used to be!
I love, I serve with proffered veins,
Where thou demandest praise thy fee,
And grateful solace for thy pains.
True love and service do but win
That I may more exceed therein.

Listen, thou child I used to be!
My soul to wrath 'gainst wrong is used,
Where thy rash combat utterly
The doer and the deed confused.
Right wrath the deed stabs soon or late,
The doer spares, his deed to hate.

Listen, thou child I used to be!
Unproud I move, and yet unbowed,

Where thou wast fed with vanity,
  Thy chiefest pride — thou wast not proud!
True lowliness forgets its state,
And equal trains with small or great.

Listen, thou child I used to be!
  I am what thy dream-wandering sense
Did shape, and thy fresh will decree,
  Yet all with subtle difference:
Where heaven's arc did seem to end,
Still on and on fair fields extend.

Yet listen, child I used to be!
  Nothing of thine I dare despise,
Nor passion, deed, nor fantasy;
  For lo! the soul's far years shall rise
And with unripeness charge this hour
Would boast o'er thine its riper power.

THE SHADOW-SELF

At morning-tide the traveler westward bound
  Before him sees a lengthened shadow run;
At noon it shrinks beneath him on the ground;
  Unmarked, it rearward moves at set of sun.

A juggling shadow-self the youth pursues,
  And questions with a fond and curious mind;
This shade the man in prime subdues,
  In mellow age has cast it far behind.

A CHANT OF THE FOUGHT FIELD

Nunc dimittis.

As one who under evening skies
Upon a fought field stricken lies
(Unknown for stains of blood and grime)
Is fain the mortal shaft to draw
And let life issue through the flaw,
Even so am I, and even so,
Unhand me, Time, and let me go —
Unhand me, Time!

Upon his clogged and languid sense
Vague cries are borne — he heeds not whence,
Nor if they utter cheer sublime,
Or fill the air with craven moan;
His spirit's fire is all unblown;
Even so is mine — so faint, so low;
Unhand me, Time, and let me go —
Unhand me, Time!

For heaven-truth my sword I drew,
With anger keen I did pursue
Not the frail worker but the crime
He framed in glooming ignorance.
Now let who may lift sword and lance,
Or let the rust upon them grow!
Unhand me, Time, and let me go —
Unhand me, Time!

Or well or ill if I have wrought,
My deed was mated with my thought,
As bell with bell in tuneful chime.
All things that fall to man's dear lot
I did receive, and faltered not;
Quick come the last! and even so,
Unhand me, Time, and let me go —
Unhand me, Time!

A dream it was! All that hath been
Now lapseth like some passioned scene
Played by a well-deceiving mime,
Who most of all himself deceives,
And, waking up, regretless leaves.
I reach for substance past the show —
Unhand me, Time, and let me go —
Unhand me, Time!

THE RIVAL OF HEART'S-EASE

I DREAMED you lay along the river-bank,
And I above you, yet unknown to you,
Began to pluck the wood-flowers, rank on rank,
All delicate with dew.

And all were white save one with rosy stain,
That nodded toward me in the gentle breeze;
In dreamland it was called Heart's-Pleasant-Pain,
The rival of Heart's-Ease.

With these I softly crept along the bank,
And thought to shed them one by one on you —
But you were gone! Down in dismay I sank;
My flowers away I threw.

Away I threw them all save only one;
'T is here — the blossom with the rosy stain;
And wondrous well, though hidden from the sun,
It thrives — Heart's-Pleasant-Pain!

ON THE EVE OF SLEEP

What is softer than two snowflakes meeting
In a windless fall of snow?
What is lighter than a down-ball sinking
On a still stream's polished flow?
Smoother than the liquid circle spreading
From the swallow's touch-and-go? —
Oh, softer, lighter, smoother, is the first approach of Sleep!
(Yet guard us in that moment, lest thy boon we may not keep!)

What is stiller than two blossoms kissing
Charily with petal-tips?
Sweeter than the dewdrop that their kissing
Doth unsphere — and down it slips?
What is dimmer than the night-moth groping
For the lily's nectared lips? —

Oh, stiller, sweeter, dimmer, is the first approach
of Sleep!
(Yet guard us in that moment, lest thy boon we
may not keep!)

What is subtler than the clues that tighten
Round the dancing midge's wings?
Shyer than the bird its nest concealing,
As aloof it flits and sings?
Closer than the poppy-leaf-lined chamber
Where the lone bee's cradle swings? —
Oh, subtler, shyer, closer, is the first approach of
Sleep!
(Yet guard us in that moment ere we reach thy
safest deep!)

What is stranger than the moonlight mingling
With the red fire of the west?
Wilder than an Amazonian forest
Where no foot the mould hath pressed?
Dearer than the heart's most secret brooding
On the face it loveth best? —
Oh, stranger, wilder, dearer, is the first approach
of Sleep!
(Oh, guard us in that moment, lest we waver back
and weep!)

THE ARABIAN BIRD

"WHERE hast thou been in the dreams of the night,
Thou, my delight?"
"Over the seas and over the sands
To the Ancient of Lands!"
"What hast thou seen that thy lips are so pale?
Tell me thy tale."
"Nothing I saw but a bird in a palm —
All the air was calm."
"Rare is a bird in a desert tree;
Did it sing for thee?"
"Yes, but the song thou couldst not hear
With thine untaught ear.
Under the tree my spirit stood,
Fed on sweet food!
Measureless joy in the warbled note
Of that soft, smooth throat:
A thousand may hear — to each unknown
For each listens alone!"
"Thou hast been where a mortal may not go —
By thine eyes I know!"
"Fear me not, though I stir not the air,
And my footsteps spare
The weakest blade of the sleeping grass,
As I lightly pass —
For I died, I died at the turn of the night,
I, thy delight!"

DREAMS

As I came through the Valley Sleep
(Upon each side a frowning steep),
A dream my weighted steps o'ertook:
"I am the Fear thou wouldst not brook
Through all the hours of light,
But thrust my face from sight,
My whisper from thine ear;
Now close on thee I wait, —
Thy secret Fear, —
And I foreshadow fate!"

As I came through the Valley Sleep,
Where singing waters hidden creep,
A dream arose and kissed my brow:
"I am the Heart's Desire, whom thou
Wouldst lift no voice to greet,
Nor own me conquering-sweet,
A mounting cordial fire;
I am thy bosom-mate, —
Deep Heart's Desire, —
And I foreshadow fate!"

Whoso comes through the Valley Sleep,
Whether he wake to laugh or weep,
Meets with no herald from afar,
No warning gleam of natal star;
But, in her regal place,

And with no masking face,
Unhoodwinked and unbought,
Most pure, inviolate,
The lord of thought, —
The Soul foreshadows fate !

EXPIATION

Thou repentest, and thy tears
Flow for those misfeatured years
That, with old reproach and taunt,
Thine amended footsteps haunt.
But thou mayest not, in sooth,
Placate thine aggrievèd Youth.

Thou repentest, and wouldst heap,
From thy bin and coffer deep,
Store upon their nakedness
Whom thou spurnedst all pitiless.
But thou mayest not find peace
In late doles of thine increase.

Thou repentest, and wouldst yield
All the trophies of the field
Where a great heart vailed to thee
That thy fame upreared might be.
But thou mayest not rebuild
What thy lustier growth has killed.

Thou repentest, and thy breast
Heaves for one that (well at rest)
Once thy crossed or wanton will
Could with cruel tremor fill.
But thou mayest not confer
Aught upon that slumberer.

Thou repentest! — dost thou deem
Heaven is lent unto thy scheme
That thou mayest now undo
What thy writhing heartstrings rue,
And, with dealings sooth and kind,
Of their aim thy Furies blind?

Thou repentest, and wouldst press
Forward to a sweet redress.
Ay; but if a God prefer
In thy wakened breast should stir
Grief to keep thy purpose pure,
What for thee but to endure?

Thou repentest! Well, repent!
Urge naught else, but be content
That the callous chord did break,
That thy heart at length could ache.
Ache! thou heart long proof to pain,
Though thy prayer no God constrain.

LETHE

Remembrance followed him into the skies.
They met. Awhile mute Sorrow held him thrall.
Then broke he forth in spirit words and sighs:
"Great was my sin! but at my contrite call
Came pardon and the hope of Paradise;
If this be Heaven, thy blessing on me fall!"
She looked. Peace filled her unremembering eyes;
She knew him not — she had forgotten all.

FRAGMENT

. . . . . .

Dextrous the arts that Cruelty commands.
There is a fierce-eyed hunter of the crag,
Who, marking from on high his feathered prey,
Descending in an unseen spiral slow,
Strikes talons through the helpless quarry's wings,
And steers them onward in unerring flight,
But sheathes his own, and rests in silent air
Till borne to that rough cliff and shaggy nest,
Where waits with clamors shrill an hungering brood,
Fed savage with the warm bright drops that ooze
From many a piercèd throat of sweetest song!

Dextrous the arts that Cruelty commands.
Thy hand upon my hand driveth the steel
To the deep place of life; yet should my heart
Forefeel the blow, and through its smotherings
cry,
"By thee, by thee am I dislodged, unhoused,
And sent abroad upon the wintry air!"
Then wouldst thou answer from a subtle soul,
"Nay, see! 't is thou thyself — thus — giv'st the
blow!"

JUSTICE AND MERCY

A WIND that had wandered all winter through
In at the casement with purport blew:
"Place not in human tribunals thy trust
Till Justice be merciful, Mercy be just."

The householder rose and muffled with care
The crack which admitted that free-lancing air,
Lest its song should offend the Twain at his
hearth —
Guests of a night, and aliens by birth!

Needless such care, for the one all serene
Still rubbed his soft hands, the whitest e'er seen,
The other pored over the Book of the Law:
So, unmarked passed the voice at the casement's
flaw.

But the Wind of the Spirit, invincibly clear,
The burden resumed in the householder's ear:
"Place not in human tribunals thy trust
Till Justice be merciful, Mercy be just!"

BROADWAY

I

Between these frowning granite steeps
The human river onward sweeps;
And here it moves with torrent force,
And there it slacks its heady course:
But what controls its variant flow
A keener wit than mine must show,
Who cast myself upon the tide,
And merging with its current glide, —
A drop, an atom, of the whole
Of its great bulk and wandering soul.

O curbless river, savage stream,
Thou art my wilderness extreme,
Where I may move as free, as lone,
As in the waste with wood o'ergrown,
And broodings of as brave a strain
May here unchallenged entertain,
Whether meridian light display
The swift routine of current day,
Or jet electric, diamond-clear,
Convoke a world of glamour here.

Yet when of solitude I tire,
Speak comradeship to my desire,
O most companionable tide,
Where all to all are firm allied,
And each hath countenance from the rest,
Although the tie be unconfessed!

II

I muse upon this river's brink;
I listen long; I strive to think
What cry goes forth, of many blent,
And by that cry what thing is meant, —
What simple legend of old fate
Man's voice, here inarticulate,
From out this dim and strange uproar
Still heaves upon the skyey shore!

Amid this swift, phantasmal stream
Sometimes I move as in a dream;
Then wondrous quiet, for a space,
The clanging tumult will displace;
And toil's hard gride and pleasure's hum
No longer to my ear may come:
A pantomimic, haunted throng
Fareth in silence deep and strong,
And seems in summoned haste to urge,
Half prescient, towards a destined verge!

The river flows, — unwasting flows;
Nor less nor more its volume grows,

From source to sea still onward rolled,
As days are shed and years are told;
And yet, so mutable its wave,
That no man twice therein may lave,
But, ere he can return again,
Himself shall subtle change sustain;
Since more and more each life must be
Tide-troubled by the drawing sea.

A CHRISTOPHER OF THE SHENANDOAH

ISLAND FORD, SNICKER'S GAP, JULY 18, 1864

TOLD BY THE ORDERLY

MUTE he sat in the saddle — mute 'midst our full acclaim,
As three times over we gave to the mountain echo his name.
Then, "But I could n't do less!" in a murmur remonstrant came.

This was the deed his spirit set and his hand would not shun,
When the vale of the Shenandoah had lost the glow of the sun,

And the evening cloud and the battle smoke were
blending in one.

Retreating and ever retreating, the bank of the
river we gained,
Hope of the field was none, and choice but of
flight remained,
When there at the brink of the ford his horse he
suddenly reined.

For his vigilant eye had marked where, close by
the oozy marge,
Half-parted its moorings, there lay a battered
and oarless barge.
"Quick! gather the wounded in!" and the flying
stayed at his charge.

They gathered the wounded in whence they fell
by the river-bank,
Lapped on the gleaming sand, or aswoon, 'mid
the rushes dank;
And they crowded the barge till its sides low
down in the water sank.

The river was wide, was deep, and heady the
current flowed,
A burdened and oarless craft! — straight into
the stream he rode
By the side of the barge, and drew it along with
its moaning load.

A moaning and ghastly load — the wounded — the dying — the dead!
For ever upon their traces followed the whistling lead,
Our bravest the mark, yet unscathed and undaunted, he pushed ahead.

Alone? Save for one that from love of his leader or soldierly pride
(Hearing his call for aid, and seeing that none replied),
Plunged and swam by the crazy craft on the other side.

But Heaven! what weary toil! for the river is wide, is deep;
The current is swift, and the bank on the further side is steep.
'T is reached at last, and a hundred of ours to the rescue leap.

Oh, they cheered as he rose from the stream and the water-drops flowed away!
"But I could n't do less!" in the silence that followed we heard him say;
Then the wounded cheered, and the swooning awoke in the barge where they lay.

And I? — Ah, well, I swam by the barge on the other side;

But an orderly goes wherever his leader chooses
to ride.
Come life or come death I could n't do less than
follow his guide.

THE PRISONER OF THE STANSINO

The Stansino was a small cavern imbedded in solid masonry. In the centre revolved a machine which, if the cramped prisoner chanced to fall upon it, carried him under and dropped him into a vault beneath, swarming with rats. This inhuman invention was a feature of the Metternich tyranny in Italy.

I

YES, still bloom our Tuscan meadows,
Smiles the azure overspread;
Fresh winds slake the thirst of Summer,
Nightly dews are ceaseless shed.
Vine and fig-tree heed their season,
Yielding still their rich increase;
And the olive drops her burden,
All her sleek leaves whispering peace.
God of griefless, smiling Nature,
God of blessing and of ban,
Wherefore let thine other creatures
Mock thy crown creation, man?
Oh, the olive's fruit should wither,
Blight consume the merry grape,
And a subtle fire glide snakelike,
Till the tortured earth should gape!

And the noontide should be darkened,
And the air with tongues be thick;
Cursing, all, the name of Austria
And the name of Metternich!
Ay, the Tuscan knows to curse them,
Curses from the earth's green plain,
Curses in yon smiling heaven,
(Void man's voice returns again!)
Curses from the earth's deep bosom,
Where forgotten lips draw breath!
Ah, if death-in-life Thou suff'rest,
Make such curses life-in-death;
So the grave-pit and Stansino,
Plainly heard where fail the quick,
Shall consummate terror fasten
On the soul of Metternich!

II

In our Virgil's fabled Orcus
Runs a wheel with ceaseless gyre,
Bearing round the wretch Ixion
Clinging to its fervid tire.
In the grim Stansino's centre
Runs a wheel with ceaseless gyre,
Dipping to a nether cavern
And a depth of gloom more dire.
Cramped upon the narrow ledging,
One misstep your fate must seal;
Thus you read the modern version
Of Ixion and the wheel.

Only our so gracious Minos
(Mark!) commutes the wretch's woe,
Drops him from the giddy torture
To a furtive swarm below!
Hunger's keen-eyed gnawing vassals
Straightway fall to their repast!
Presto! Where, now, is Ixion?
May his soul find peace at last!

III

He who died but yester-morning
Buried lay, like clod to clod,
For a decade and a lustrum,
While our feet above him trod:
Vain to guess how life persisted
On a pittance-crust and drink —
How a coign was found for slumber
On the vorticed cavern's brink —
If more slow to waste, life's current
Through his veins lymphatic crept;
Or if Heaven for this preserved him,
To inflame our wrath, that slept!
Fifteen years of dawns unnoted —
Fifteen years of night on night;
Buried, yet not slain of darkness,
But of God's dear, common light,
If ye trust our word, who saw him
As he came from underground!
Magistrate and priest and soldier
Were of those who stood around,

Nor were wanting doubters, urging
None within that pit could live;
Wanting not were women bringing
Food and wine restorative;
Piteous, tearful, no more doubting
Than the three who stood at dawn
On the mount of holy burial,
Ere they knew the Sleeper gone.

IV

Ah, the sun on yester-morning
Seemed a sentient glow to shed,
To atone for man's late justice,
And restore the living dead.
Backward slides the heavy panel,
Slow, as loth to yield its prize,
Sullen gapes a square of darkness,
Faced by gloomless morning skies.
Faint, as out of depths unfathomed,
Comes a voice, not sigh nor moan,
More like caverned wind's repining
Than like human sorrow's tone!
Up they draw him, darkling, drooping —
Shade of man, uncouth, aghast!
In an instant he has broken
From the arms about him cast;
With a shriek leaps forward, sunward,
Back he drops upon the ground; . . .
Touch and listen, listen closely;
Neither pulse nor breath is found.

Like a deadly bolt, the sunlight
Burst his heart; so all believe.
God! were Austria's sun as potent,
One black heart 't would straightway cleave!

ARRIA

"Pætus, my master sends death, but thereto addeth this grace, —
Choose thou the hour and the hand that shall drive the steel to its place."
Thus spake a Dacian slave, noiseless retiring apace.
Blanched were the lips of Arria.

Anon their rich color returned in a threefold resurgent wave.
"Death must thou have, O my dearest, yet not by the hand of a slave!
Lordly give back to the gods the lordly gift that they gave!"
Smiled the red lips of Arria.

(Mark! not the starveling of life, not the scorner, is freest from fear;
Hearts richest in love are foremost to rush on the foeman's spear;
And the keen accolade that maketh immortal falls sacred and dear
As the kiss from the lips of Arria.)

And yet mused the knight; for who would not
stay, though but for a span,
Ere he pass to the untried gods, this life in the
known frame of man?
So strong through his veins the impact of years
to be canceled yet ran, —
And so sweet were the lips of Arria!

"Now death or craven delaying!" clear rang her
silvery note.
"Thou wouldst not falter in choice, thou, ever to
honor devote!"
As throbs the soft breast of a startled dove, so
throbbed her soft throat,
Yet firm the red lips of Arria.

With the dower of her beauty upon her she stood
in his wavering sight;
A true Roman wife, he beheld her, the peer of a
true Roman knight.
"Hast thou lost the old way, O my lord, dost
thou need one to set thee aright?"
Still smiled the red lips of Arria.

And, smiling, she laid her warm hand on the
steel true-tempered and cold.
"This were the way!" (She has driven the
point through her tunic's white fold!)
"This *is* the way, — none other; but, Pætus, it
hurts not — behold!" —
And hushed were the lips of Arria.

Oh, horror! oh, pity! oh, love! But now is no
moment to weep;
Let the bright death, from her heart to his own,
importunate leap;
Ay, for it hurts not when life flitteth forth from
its cabinet deep, —
Forth to the soul of Arria!

One touch of her consecrate lips, one instant
above her he stands;
In the next he hath caught the life-drinking
blade in his two firm hands.
He hath tried the old way, — the old way that
ever mocked tyrannous bands, —
Now forth to the soul of Arria!

ATYS

Sweet are the sheltered, nestling vales and
plains the toil of man has crowned;
I love them all, but more I love the lands that
know not tilth nor bound —
Waste hills, the lordless hills eterne, and winds
of heaven on heavenward ground!
Friendly the broad, embracing arms of Sylvan's
oak at midday hot,
The chestnut-groves with dropping mast, the
fruited orchard's lawny plot;
But these too long delay my feet; I leave them,
and regret them not:

I heed the Mighty Mother's call, far up the
shaggy mountain-side;
With her let me abide,
And listen to divine
Deep breathings from the mystic trees of dark-
ling, reminiscent pine.

Great Rhea goes with soft-foot steeds; their eyes
are quenchless, sparkling flame;
The hot wilds bore and bred them fierce, yet do
they pace subdued and tame;
No lash, no rein, controls their strength; she
curbs them calling them by name.
Great Rhea goes as she was wont (yet now by
mortal eyes unseen),
A crown of turrets on her head, her gaze un-
fathomed, searching-keen.
Her gloomy heralds hasten on, to rouse the for-
est high and green;
But when she gains the summit dark, no more
they urge the shrilling strife
Of cymbal and of fife;
She hushes them by signs —
Hark! Atys sighing in his sleep, amid the mel-
ancholy pines!

He slumbers in some fragrant cell, smooth-rocked
between the earth and sky.
Delicious Summer danced and sung, Winter with
griding tread swept by;

These could not rouse him, yet a dream has
power to make him start and sigh!
Remembers he how heaven could woo when
heaven an earthly love would gain,
How goddess' smiles were golden days and god-
dess' tears were mists and rain,
When Rhea, with large-gifting hands, would
share with him her wide domain?
Nay! he but sees Pessinus' flower, by stolen
paths through kindly glooms;
For him her fine lip blooms,
Her eye with love-light shines —
Hark! Atys singing in his sleep, amid the dim,
melodious pines!

He, dreaming, sings the maiden's praise — ah,
sorrow! soon he sings no more!
The goddess to the bridal came; in each dread
hand a scourge she bore;
She struck with fear the marriage-guests, and
smote his brain with madness sore.
His tender love he spurned, he fled; up rough,
untrodden steeps he fled;
The mountain-berry was his food, the thinning
turf his nightly bed;
And airily he wove of leaves a crown for his un-
pitied head.
The searcher craftily he shunned; yet were his
footprints crimson-traced
Along the bitter waste

Of flints and thorny spines —
Hark! Atys moaning in his sleep, amid the many-wintered pines!

The rough-girt, unimpassioned trees their softening hearts did then unveil,
And close the frenzied wanderer round; thenceforward never did they fail,
Responsive to his trancèd thought, to breathe the mournful, moving tale.
And therefore when we mortals come among these chanters sombre-tressed,
Our mastered spirits flow with theirs, and are by surging moods oppressed:
We hope, exult — we madden, brood — and now are sorrowfully blest;
No murmur from his cumbered heart but wakes in ours a fellow-strain;
Our own most secret pain
The solemn wood divines —
Hark! Atys sobbing in his sleep, amid the piteous, rocking pines!

The Mighty Mother bows her down; she answers him, deep sob for sob;
She lays her hand upon his heart; she feels, she hails, its strengthening throb!
But from his lips what words are these, that thus her cheek of color rob?

She turns her face, withdraws her hand; the
seals of sleep she will not break.
Undying youth, immortal dream, for love a for-
tressed mansion make;
Were slumber loosed, the dream remains; then,
wherefore should she bid him wake?
O Mighty Mother, come away, since not to thee,
in power arrayed,
But to the Phrygian maid,
His soul, released, inclines —
Leave Atys murmuring in his sleep, amid the
old, dark-memoried pines!

II

SOUTHFOLD AND THE FLOCK

SOUTHFOLD

A PARABLE OF LITTLE STRANGERS

Southfold? only this I know:
When you 've passed a world of snow,
And one last great ridge is crossed,
Then farewell to snow and frost!
On a sudden spring 's begun!
Steady shines the loving sun
On the fields that southward run,
On the walls and broad low roof
That need not be winter-proof,
For the winter keeps aloof;
Or, if any drift of snow
From the great white ridge should blow,
It but makes a tinkling rill
Falling, falling, falling still
From the eaves, while all around
Greener grows the sunny ground.

I have heard a traveler say,
Thither every tender stray,
Every silly straggler, goes.
Yet the way it never knows
(By some kind enchantment toled)

To the happy fields and fold.
There the lambs are that were born
On a January morn,
And the birds that fledged so late
None would pity them and wait
Till their wings would bear them right
On the long, long autumn flight.
There the wood-bees are whose home
With its store of honeycomb
By the chopper was laid low;
Houseless, they were forced to go
Out upon the wintry air!
And the willow-moth is there,
That mistook the time of year,
Waking in December drear,
When the cutting winds were keen.
There the apple-tree is seen,
That each autumn dreams of May,
And throws out a blooming spray;
And the violet that peeps forth
To be frowned on by the North.

These and many more beside
In that blessed place abide;
But the sweetest creature there
(So the traveler did declare)
Is the child that knows no love
Save the Father's from above.
Thither long ago he came,
Lost, and knowing not his name;

There were teardrops to be kissed
From the eyes whose light none missed;
Now he has himself forgot
All the sorrow in his lot.

There the time is early May —
And the time is morning day.
There the late bird tries its wings,
And its young song blithely sings;
And the winter lambs are glad,
Rosy-tinged in new wool clad.
And the wood-bees' murmuring seems
Like the music heard in dreams;
And the willow-moth is fanned
Up and down the flowery land,
While the apple-tree holds all
Her fair flowers (which never fall),
And the violet need not fear
Though it bloom the whole round year;
And the child that knows no love
Save the Father's from above,
Has a heart of love to give
All that in the fold do live —
All that like himself were lost
Till the great white ridge was crossed.

Little Song, thyself a stray,
Join the troop that, night and day,
Unobserved do thither go —

'T is the only home thou 'lt know!
There in mellow trills and laughters,
Haunt the scented pine-wood rafters
And the broad low roof that cover
Little strangers the world over.

CHILD AND POET

I

Oh, the child a poet is!
Poet's pleasures too are his;
Would he had the art to tell
What he sees and hears so well, —
How the hills so love the sky
In its tender haze they lie;
How the sky so loves the streams,
Every pool has heavenly dreams.
He can guess what says the breeze,
Sighing, singing, through the trees;
What the sunbeam, what the rain,
Or the smoke's slow-mounting train;
All the meaning of the birds,
Which they will not put in words;
And the tree-toad's mystic trill
Heard from far at evening still;
And the beckoning ways and looks
Of the flowers in dewy nooks —
Yes! and of the dewdrops fine,
In the early morning-shine!

He has friends where ye have none;
Fellows in a rush or stone;
Palace-royal in the clouds,
Sunset barge with sails and shrouds.
Oh, the child a poet is,
Though unskilled in harmonies;
Would he had the art to tell
What he hears and sees so well,
Ere his senses, grown less keen,
Say they have not heard nor seen.
(Let him not too quickly lose
These rare pleasures, gracious Muse.)

II

Now, the poet is a child,
Whom the years have not beguiled
To forget the magic lore
That is childhood's careless store.
Oh, the poet is a child!
And he loves the new and wild;
But the old to him is new,
And what seems but tame to you
He with kind delight can see
Laugh in its sweet liberty!
He is foiled and cheated never, —
Poet's truth is truth forever!

Though his song you may not heed,
Though his rhyme you will not read,
Song and rhyme true records hold

Of your morning age of gold.
What you saw in that fair time,
Wild, or lovely, or sublime
In the mountains, groves, or streams,
Clear upon his vision gleams.
What you heard of strange report
Throughout Nature's fields and court,
Told of man or dreamt of God,
Still he hears spread all abroad.
If you do not see and hear,
'T is for time-worn eye and ear:
Child and poet shall not sever —
And their truth is truth forever!

DEW-BELLS

I

Once on a summer morning
In Elfland I awoke,
When, all without a warning,
Sweet tongues the silence broke;
Sweet tongues of tiniest bells,
Fine tongues of crystal sound,
Rang all the fields around,
And tinkled down the dells —
Merry bells,
Faery bells!
They tinkled down the dells!

A long time I lay quiet,
To hear the frolic peal
Some great event reveal —
A muster, or a riot,
Or royal pixy wedding!
I heard a light foot treading
The measures of a reel:
It was a giddy elf;
I asked what bells were ringing.
He laughed: "Why, look yourself,
And see the dew-bells swinging!
Dew-bells,
True bells,
Glad bells,
Mad bells —
Green bell-ropes all are swinging!"

Quoth I: "My friend, you fable
About this joyous Babel;
I 've heard, indeed, of bluebells,
But dew-bells —
They 're new bells!
My little friend, you fable!"

Then up my head I lifted:
The grasses young and tender,
On points of lances slender,
Bore each a drop that shifted
To take the morning splendor;
Clear drops,

Like teardrops
(Or like lost diamond eardrops),
Did lightly clash together
In the soft zephyr weather,
And ring a tuneful change.
By little hands unseen
Were swayed the bell-ropes green;
But it was passing strange
No liquid bell was shivered,
Though each one danced and quivered;
Brave bells,
Suave bells,
Oh, how they danced and quivered!

II

When on a summer morning
I watch the wondrous grass,
I hear wise people scorning;
They whisper as they pass:
"Poor youth! his wits are flown;
He babbles things unknown,
He talks of chimes one hears
Among the grassy spears!"

Ah me! have I grown deaf
Since I through Elfland strayed?
I see, with smiling grief,
The crystal dew-bells swinging
In sunshine and in shade,
But cannot hear them ringing —

Dew-bells,
True bells!
Joy-bells,
Coy bells!
I cannot hear them ringing!

THE NATURALIST

He bides at home, and treasures all
That to his homely lot doth fall.
He says, to journey hence
Were mere improvidence,
For winds of thought have sown his field,
And he must wait the priceless yield.
His own loved arbor-vine
Provides Provençal wine.
His hemlocks chant the selfsame runes
That, under wild Norwegian moons,
The saga-singing firs
To Night and Fame rehearse.
His oak-trees drop no other mast
Than that Dodona's oaks did cast.
The crab-fruits of the waste
To him more flavorous taste
Than apples of Hesperides;
And in broad-waving filices
His fancy-lighted eyes
Mark lesser palms arise.

He keeps no garden richly ranked
With strangers in bright livery pranked,
But takes delight to greet
Blue speedwell at his feet,
And mints that yield the bee its food,
And slender sorrel of the wood,
And chickweed in the grass
(His ready weather-glass),
And primrose, slumbering all the day,
At eve to meet the moonlight fay!
The flag flower is his France
And dream of old romance;
While everlasting whitely nods
Above these nibbled pasture sods,
Why scale the Alpine ice
To pluck the edelweiss?

He says, he must not go from home,
Who keeps an inn for those who roam:
Many a warbler gay
Stops on its northward way;
The swallows that proclaim his spring
From far Bermudas tidings bring.
He finds the pewee's nest,
With ruffled lichens drest,
The field lark's under grassy eaves;
And one he takes, and three he leaves,
Of cherished eggs that lie
Concealed in covert sly;

He is too shrewd for birds' decoy.
He also knows what tasks employ
The solitary bee —
The rose-leaf privacy
Of chambers sealèd and profound,
With velvet curtains hung around —
The nectar coined to keep
The larva weak from sleep.
He stoops to look on myrmidons
Arrayed in shining jet or bronze —
A small world's civil feud,
A field with carnage strewed,
And victors trampling down the slain
Upon the noiseless battle-plain!
No creature can evade
The snares that he has laid
To learn its secret haunts and thrift.
The timorous hare is not so swift,
Nor tortoise is so slow,
Nor fox such craft can show,
But wit and patience, never spent,
Outspeed, outstay, and circumvent;
And what least guides can show
He follows fain to know.

He says he dares not disesteem
Or savant's lore or poet's dream.
The flood from heaven's urn
He sees in mist return,
And, in a globèd drop of dew,

The round world tremble into view.
The flowers of frost and snow,
That in night stillness blow,
And lucid grain and glinting spar
That in the marl imprisoned are,
Observe relation fine,
In order crystalline.

To him yon field of billowing grain
Spreads broad and free as pampas plain,
And neighboring hills are high,
In his ennobling eye.
He will not yield that Helicon
And Castaly more limpid run
Than streams that take their rise
Anear his native skies;
In every clear unfailing spring
He hears the nymph Egeria sing.
She to a prince of old
Did laws and arts unfold;
Still Numa comes, and still she reads
Humanities in woods and meads.
The morning has a voice
That makes his heart rejoice;
The noon pours amber-drink for him,
And fills his goblet to the brim;
The owlet-light doth lend
The countenance of a friend,
And he with hooded evening holds
Strange trysts by murmuring fields and wolds.

No season but is kind, —
Best fitted to his mind;
So, none shall hear him wish away
The pinching winter bare and gray;
Nor will he chide the sky,
If it be wet or dry:
The grain is lodged! he will not fret;
He holds rich Nature in his debt,
The balance to maintain,
Adjusting loss with gain.
He bides at home and treasures all
That to his homely lot doth fall:
Each twelvemonth to this seer
Completes a Wondrous Year.

SIGNS OF THE SEASON

I BROKE a spray of willow by the brook,
When out, a jet of sprightly talk it shook:
"Ho! ho! I'll kiss with blossoms silver-sleek
That sun-and-wind-browned cheek!"

I found an oakling and plucked off his cap,
When up he sprung from his old nurse's lap:
"Good-morrow and good-morrow, friend, to you;
I'm for the sky — adieu!"

I peered into so many smiling eyes;
They met my own with glances blithe and wise:

"You need not look o'erhead — we violets show
A little heaven below!"

I stood beside a shallow meadow pool,
I watched the fairy-shrimps — a twinkling school:
"We children of the sun and moistened clod
Come at Spring's beck and nod!"

I saw a muskrat high floods could not drown,
Now smoothly swimming through the water brown:
"I'll build me summer galleries cool and dank
Beneath the grassy bank!"

I turned the turf, when out an earthworm rolled
Uplifting some loose grains of mellowing mould:
"I must make haste to stir and break the soil,
To help good farmers' toil!"

I saw a spider stretch her gossamer ropes;
She told me of her secret plans and hopes:
"I catch the midge, and tangle in my clues
Sunbeams and rainbow hues!"

I heard a honey-bee that, hovering low
Above the grass, sang songs of long ago:
"New year, new flowers, new sweets, new joys — and yet
The old I'll not forget!"

I started wide awake, and looked about;
I heard a flicker from his watch-tower shout —
And "quick-quick, quick-quick, quick-quick,
quick-quick — *quick!*"
His rousing notes fell thick!

TAMBERLIK TO THE BIRDS

[A personal friend of Tamberlik, the famous tenor, sends to a London newspaper the following story of an incident which happened at Madrid, where the artist lived for twelve or thirteen years: "One morning we were walking through the bird-market, when suddenly he drew a bank-note for a thousand francs from his pocket, bought up all the little creatures, opened the cages, and shouted laughingly as the birds flew up into the air, 'Go and be free, my brothers!'" — *New York Evening Post.*]

Cage-door is open — hark!
Sparrow, and thrush, and linnet,
Starling, nightingale, lark —
Gray, or golden, or sable —
Out, like a shaft to the mark!

Cage-door is open — fly!
Whistler, twitterer, warbler,
And you that but sob or cry,
You, the slumber-smooth ringdove,
Out, to the sun and the sky!

Cage-door is open — free!
You by the grassy meadow,

And you in the thicket or tree!
  You in the fold of the valley,
And you by the boundless sea!

Cage-door is open — sing!
  Pure gladness! fly southward, fly northward,
Each one in your turn carry spring,
  Faithful, unbribed, undelaying,
Alike to peasant and king.

Cage door is open — sing!
  Sing this: "'T was our own brother freed us,
But ah, 't is a wondrous sad thing;
  For pity and love he freed us,
Yet himself hath a cage-fast wing!"

Cage-door is open — nay,
  Be free, and forget, O my brothers,
Him who released you this day,
  For his soul will sing in its prison,
In the birds' and the poet's way!

SAID THE WREN TO THE THRUSH

"THEY say," said the wren to the thrush — "and
    I know, for I build at their eaves —
They say, every song that we sing, on the wing
    or hid in the leaves,
  Is sung for their pleasure —
And you know 't is for Love and ourselves that
    we sing!"

"Did they say," said the thrush to the wren, —
"I 'm out of their circle, I own, —
Did they say that the songs they sing are not for themselves alone,
But to give *us* pleasure?"
"Why, no," said the wren, "they said no such thing!"

CROSSING THE BAY

Crossing the Bay,
I watched the swift gulls incessant at toil or at play:
And the many were gray, as the wave ere it breaks is gray,
But the one was white
As the wave at full height,
When it blanches and breaks in a passion of vehement light.

The many were gray,
The one was white. —
A shot o'er the Bay,
And a cry from the gray:
"We hear, and we fear something follows to work us despite!"
Mounting in flight
From the kiss of the spray,
Made answer the white:

"O comrades, while me ye have with you let
nothing dismay;
Ye are many — and gray,
I am one — and white!
While me ye have with you let nothing your
courage affray!"

A shot o'er the Bay, —
And down dropped the white;
And the white of the spray where he fell for an
instant blushed bright.
Crossing the Bay,
This I beheld, and fashioned a rhyme of the way:
For men, as for birds, Fate's mark is the white,
not the gray!

PETITS NAUFRAGES

I saw a little shallop
That lately came to grief,
Midway a slender river,
Upon a pebble reef;
The water-weed lapped round it
With many an oozy leaf.
But what is that to you or me?
Such little shipwrecks aye must be.

I saw two shattered pinions
With rainbow colors pied,

That once had carried Psyche
In beauty and in pride;
The summer dust befouled them,
Nor yet would kindly hide.
But what is that to you or me?
Such petty ruin aye must be.

I saw a mother wood-dove,
Her gray breast dabbled red,
And, above the evening whisper
Of old boughs overhead,
I heard the cry of nestlings
That waited to be fed.
But what is that to you or me?
Such petty sorrow aye must be.

To high estates pertaineth
The majesty of woe;
Yet see how lightsome creatures,
That Heaven hath humbled so,
The selfsame way of ruin
With selfsame paces go!
But what were these to you or me,
Save that a fellow-fate we see?

The keel of puny venture,
The summer's tenderling, —
The butterfly, the wood-dove
With death-arrested wing,

All bid us, as they vanish,
Their Linus-song to sing.
But what were these to you or me
Save that with them we soon shall be?

HALF SIGHT AND WHOLE SIGHT

This flower of the lilied field — do I see it completely?
Over its wonder-face mine eye runneth fleetly,
One moment proclaiming it mine —
Color and texture and line.

Ah, but already something it is, hath escaped me;
Ah, but my conquest is not as the free fancy shaped me!
Humbly my vaunt I recall;
I but see that I see not all.

And now as I gaze, sight's possession grows fainter and fainter.
Am I solely thwarted? Nay, nor savant nor painter
All this perfection can see,
But only in kind and degree.

Each purblind alone, whole sight requires the whole human,

The eye of the child and the graybeard, of man and of woman.
Poet divine, can it be
Full vision concentres in thee?

Thou beholdest, indeed, some mystical intimate beckoning
Out of the flower's honeyed heart, that passeth our reckoning.
Yet when hast thou seen, or shalt see,
With the eye of yon hovering bee?

THE FRINGED GENTIAN

Once, to the Angel of Birds far up in the rippling air,
From low on the sun-loved earth the Angel of Flowers breathed a prayer:
"Four plumes from the bluebird's wing — and I 'll make me something rare!"

Four plumes from the bluebird's wing, as fast to the South he flew!
The Angel of Flowers caught them up as they fell in the autumn dew,
And shaped with a twirl of her fingers this spire of feathery blue.

THE CLOSED GENTIAN

WHAT shall I say of thee,
Flower all elusive, guarding alike from the rain and the sun
The mystical heart of thyself —
What shall I say of thee?
Hast thou some foe thou wouldst shun?
Art thou a shrine — the saint of the shrine — the pale pilgrim seeker?
Or else to the bee and bold elf
Knowing the way of thee,
Art thou a chamber for feasting and revel, and do they purvey of thee
Honey, and wine in a beaker?

A SEASIDE ROSE

I TOOK a flush toll
From the roses that wave on the knoll;
I spared not the roses that follow
The stream that greens the warm hollow;
But I plucked back my hand
From the Beauty that blooms in the bitter white sand.
And my worship was great
(As my wonder was great)
Hearing her rose-lips bland
Proclaim:

"'Love-in-the-Waste' is my name!
Subservient Hate
Feeds mine estate,
Bows to my God-lighted flame!
Here am I set
Thine heart and thine hope to abet —
'Love-in-the-Waste' is my name!"

THE WOOD-PEWEE

"PEER! peer! peer!"
Far and aloof,
A night of pines beneath,
And through their crannied roof —
Keen as a sword from its sheath —
Lo, the lone-lingering morning star!
Aloof and afar,
From undiscovered dim, green perch,
Comes a long note of search, —
Voice of mystery,
Voice of warning,
Crossed with the mere shadow of fear, —
"Peer! peer! peer!"

It comes to the ear
Of the dell-cradled Morning.
On her fair hand she props
Her curl-clustered head
Whence the unlighted drops

Of night-dew one by one are shed.
Still far and near —
"Peer! peer! peer!"

She listens warily —
Falls dreaming for a moment's space,
Then riseth, and, stepping airily,
Taketh her way apace, —
White-footed, wonder-eyed, balm-breathing Morning!
While aloft, from dim green perch,
Fainter grows
To its tremulous close
That long note of search, —
Voice of mystery,
Voice of warning,
Crossed with the mere shadow of fear, —
"Peer! peer! peer!"

WHY DID YE SO?

THESE found a voice who never spake before,
In Shadow Land these witness evermore! —
"I was the moth, flower-like upon the wind,
Your wrinkled savant in his charnel pinned.
Why did ye so?"

"I was the fledgling that, of mine own will,
Did keep fast-closed my soft and tender bill

To food your cruel kindness did prepare ;
Famished, I died — for mother-love and care.
Why did ye so ? "

" I was Llewellyn's dog, that anger smote
When my rash master saw on breast and throat
The lean wolf's blood, the while in safety slept
The cradle-child my faithful love had kept.
Why did ye so ? "

" I was the snow-white ranger of the snow.[1]
The Arctic traveler met me. Blow for blow
I fought; my cub upon my back fought, too,
Till crimson all the snow around us grew.
Why did ye so ? "

" I was Harpado from Xarama's bank ;
My life the sands in gay Granada drank " —
" And I the steed Harpado's horn did gore ! "
In Shadow Land these witness evermore.
Why did ye so ?

CYBELE AND HER CHILDREN

The Mother has eternal youth,
Yet in the fading of the year,
For sake of what must fade, in ruth
She wears a crown of oak leaves sear.

[1] Narrated by Dr. Kane.

By whistling woods, by naked rocks,
That long have lost the summer's heat,
She calls the wild unfolded flocks,
And points them to their shelter meet.

In her deep bosom sink they all:
The hunter and the prey are there;
No ravin-cry, no hunger-call;
These do not fear, and those forbear.

The winding serpent watches not;
Unwatched, the field-mouse trembles not;
Weak hyla, quiet in his grot,
So rests, nor changes line or spot.

For food the Mother gives them sleep;
Against the cold she gives them sleep;
To cheat their foes she gives them sleep, —
For safety gives them death-like sleep.

The Mother has eternal youth,
And therefrom, in the wakening year,
Their life revives; and they, in sooth,
Forget their mystic bondage drear!

LUCINA

THINE are the buds within the woody spray
That reddens toward the spring and lengthening
day;
Thine subtly, from the patient toiling root,
To draw sweet currents to the topmost shoot. —
Smite thou with solar shaft,
Rock on Æolian draft,
Buffet with down-poured floods, —
Feed strong thy tenderlings, the unblown buds!

Thine are the germs that when the year died
down
Hid them below the year's despoilèd crown;
Thine to release to them the vital store
That garnered lies at the white frostless core. —
Dislodge the cumbering mould,
Shower them with Titan's gold,
In sylvan glades, in meads;
They are thy little wards, the striving seeds.

And thine the yet unplumed, unsinging hope
Of singing ones that by a sun-warm slope,
Or hollow where the brake is first unfurled,
Hover, and brood the centre of a world. —
Be their mute hope thy care,
Soon on the dew-fresh air
Faint hunger-cries be heard, —
Thou quickener of the nighted, shell-bound bird!

Thine, thine all life until the birth-hour fall,
And nascent being waken at thy call!
Then fleest thou, inconstant, having won
For each the world-embathing air and sun.
Not stayed by gift or vow, —
A soft half-memory thou,
A waning aureole
From the bright mist that wrapped the stranger soul!

Thou — is it thou that to the early year
Lendest a glory fugitive and dear,
A passion to its chill, dim-colored flowers,
A restless vigil to its murmuring hours?
O chary ministrant
Of dreams revisitant,
When vernal winds arise
Breathing vague cheer from other earth and skies!

As the pent leaf and song-bird wait for thee
To dart the orient beam that sets them free,
We wait some tremulous forerunning glow,
Signal of life supremer than we know. —
In-shining Morn and Spring,
To fields Elysian bring
And crown with being's whole, —
Thou Daybreak of the worn night-traveling soul!

III

LA MUSE S'AMUSE

GRAND PLANS

TRANSLATED FROM BÉRANGER

A SUBJECT for heroic verse I 've found;
Ere ten years pass this work the world shall see:
Yes, then my brows with epic laurel bound,
My royal claim shall well established be.

My subject lends itself to tragic forms;
On strong and rapid wing my flight I hold;
My piece is greeted with applausive storms,
And I am showered with honors, glory, gold.

On tragedy must patient labor wait;
The ode remains, — therein my theme I 'll cast;
The ode, with incense rich, can make one's state
Like that of kings, or even gods, at last.

The ode requires a stately surge and swell;
The song will better suit my theme; ah, then
Sleep, Pindar, Homer, Æschylus, sleep well!
I dream an eagle — and I wake a wren!

What great design but slips and ebbs away?
So many a genius fails through impulse lost.
'T is thus with all: who only songs essay
Shall but achieve a quatrain, at the most.

THE WISE AND THE FOOLISH SHEPHERD

I

THERE was a waggish shepherd lad of old,
Who found it dull, no doubt, to watch a fold,
And practice on the Pan-pipe innocent,
So sought and found a new divertisement,
To wit: whenever travelers passed him by,
"Wolf! wolf! Jove help me!" was his plaintive cry.
So many times this little game he tried,
At length 't was known to all the countryside;
And when, in autumn weather, keen and cool,
The gray contractor came and took his wool,
(And eke his mutton, and himself as well!)
They thought his "Wolf" cry still the same old sell.

So runs our precious fable, but the truth
Is as I tell it now: That gamesome youth
Continued still to sell, and ne'er was sold,
But, full of honors and of love, grew old.
Whene'er he made a hue and cry, all ran,
Both gentlefolk and peasants, to a man.

'T is true the ferine foe they never saw,
But certain marks left by his savage paw,

Which tenderly they salved, whilst God they praised
Their shepherd true had not been slain, though badly grazed!

II

Another shepherd wight there was, alas!
As silly as the sheep that nipped the grass;
For he, in days of safety and content,
Did practice well the Pan-pipe innocent;
And other times, when danger he surmised,
Kept faithful watch, so not to be surprised.
The grizzly mountaineer oft prowled about;
The shepherd stood his ground, but raised no shout,
Till, on a day the wolf grew fell and fierce,
One cry the shepherd uttered, fit to pierce
Whatever ear to human anguish keen,
Whatever heart that pitiful had been.

The truth proceeds to say (no fable this),
No passer-by deemed aught had chanced amiss,
But one to other spake, "That shepherd boy
Thinks he befools us with his cheap decoy!"
'T is true, when half a twelvemonth had rolled by,
And Pan-pipe melody, and bleating cry
Of sheep no more were heard, but blanching bones
Were seen amid the upland turf and stones,

The question rose, "Was there not once, up yonder,
A silly soul that used with flock and pipe to wander?"

SPENSERIAN STANZAS

(NOT IN THE FAERIE QUEENE)

SCENE — *A Wilderness on a remote border of the realm swayed by the Faerie Queene.*

THERE, as the royall beast in slomber lay,
His yellow mane all in the sunne dispred,
I lightly smote him with my launcegay;
Whereat he sluggishly upreared his hed,
As one that had on dainty meates bene fed
Ere he in Morpheus webby toiles was caught.
Though erst I had bene sore disquieted,
His gentle mien great corage in me wrought,
And, "Lyon, where is Una?" thus I him besought.

Then gan that mightie beast to quake and quayle,
To make his voice full pittifull and small,
To start, to stop, as loath to tell the tale:
"Fayre Una is — but death must come to all,
Or in the thatchèd hut or loftie hall!
Here wandring, farre from peace and safeties port,

Despite my care a thousand ills might fall;
Wherefore, to save her from all scath and tort,
Paynim, I steeled my hart — I ate her up, in
short!"

A BARD TO HIS MÆCENAS

(ODE XX. BOOK II. HORACE)

"Oh, not on spent or feeble wing
Up through the liquid air I spring,
Leave earth, and malice blind,
And critics far behind!

"Superior I, — then do not fear
Such worth shall die, Mæcenas dear;
The Styx's dingy flow
I shall not undergo;

"For bristling quills and plumes I feel
Upon my arms and shoulders steal;
And now, my wings I loose,
I soar, — a very goose."

WORLD-WIDE FAME

Voices of genii through the wide air ran
(Who knoweth, if in pity or in mirth?) —
"See what vainglory marks the ways of man!
This had some honor in his native earth;

But not the nearest planet knew his name,
And few of us can tell from whence he came —
Yet the nude soul still boasts of world-wide fame!"

ANAXAGORAS

When shallow hearts reproached the pilgrim wise,
"Wanderer, why dost not thou thy country prize?"
He raised to Heaven his tranquil, smiling eyes, —
"I do," he answered; "*there* my country lies!"

VANITY

How brave it is, in all its splendor drest!
How poor, when of its lordly gear divest!
So Juno's bird, if his gay plumage fall,
In abject grief hides under hedge or wall.

TRAVELING FOR HEALTH

In quest of health, I roved the world around.
A mile from home a healing spring I found.
"Here 's health — but mark!" (the naiad smiled advice)
"Each day, *on foot*, you here must journey thrice!"

THE RURAL MUSE

When down he sits to cultivate the muse
Some vine or tree unpruned invites outside;
Outside his study demon hard pursues,
And through the window pen and parchment chide!

A STYLE OF HIS OWN

Scriblerius reads no writings (save his own),
For fear his style should lose its vigorous tone, —
Which gravely some approve, while others smile,
Well-pleased to learn Scriblerius *has* a style.

THE SILENT PARTNER

He had no thoughts, no wingèd words had I;
To conquer all defects we did combine:
He fledged my thoughts — now round the world they fly,
But ah, the flock is counted his, not mine!

A LUCUBRATION

He held a firefly to the page, and read
Ten lines of Homer by the light it shed.

Released, it went upon its shining way —
A wiser firefly? Ah! let sages say.

PATIENCE CEASED TO BE A VIRTUE

Long, long, and sweetly he had borne each load,
At last some slight increase drove in the goad;
Then cried they all whose burdens bent him low,
"'T is strange, 't is sad, that trifles fret him so!"

MISTAKEN MAGNANIMITY

The storm of words was past, the air was cleared,
When "I forgive you!" thus he volunteered.
"If any one forgives," she said, "'t is *I!*" —
The storm returned, and murky grew the sky.

A COUNTER

So knavishly they played the game of hearts,
She counted him a victim to her arts,
He thought her snared. So, pleased both went their way;
And yet, forsooth, old strategists were they!

THE SOCIAL TIGRESS

BESIDE her lair and winding paths are seen
Full many slain, and many more a-mort.
And is our jungle beauty's zest so keen?
Ah yes! yet not from hunger, but from sport.

COÖPERATION

To cancel wrong it ever was required
The wrong should be forgiven, and forgot:
Ah, see, how well have thou and I conspired,
Since I forgive, and thou rememberest not!

A BIRD FROM THE CAGE

I GUESS thou art a roving cage-bird — thou,
With thy lame flights between low bough and bough,
And with thine anxious peerings there and here —
As though betwixt the wires thou still didst peer!

URBS IN RURE

WHAT suit makes he to Nature? Let him pass.
She is to him but a wild outland lass;

She wearies him (would he his heart confess),
For he discerns not her true loveliness.

A VIOLET IN NOVEMBER

SHINE in, low sun, upon this southward spot;
Here let the sateless black-frost pasture not;
So May's lost child, freed from all season harms,
Shall dream she nestles in her mother's arms.

A POET

BETTER for thee if in Time's jocund spring
Thou hadst been born — but cease thou not to sing;
For song and dream, poor soul, are all thou hast
To safeguard thee on glooming Autumn cast!

THE STAR IN THE STREAM

SEE, down the bank, a broken fiery gleam —
Antares drowned within our meadow stream!
But now, lift up thy wonder-loving eye —
Lo, still Antares burns in southern sky!

THE SOUL IN THE BODY

WHAT if the Soul her real life elsewhere holds,
Her faint reflex Time's darkling stream enfolds,
And thou and I, though seeming dwellers here,
Live somewhere yonder in the starlit sphere?

INSOMNIA

A HOUSE of sleepers — I, alone unblest,
Am yet awake and empty vigil keep.
When these, who spend life's day with me, find rest,
Oh, let me not be last to fall asleep!

THE FLOWER OF DREAMS

WHAT flower was that I plucked in sleep last night?
Not this world's lily, violet, or rose;
The Flower of Dreams greets not the upper light:
In under-fields, with asphodel, it blows.

BETWEEN TWO

POOR Love loved two whom anger did inflame.
Each sought Love's aid. But when at last, all loth,

Impòrtuned Love an armèd champion came,
These two, now friends — Love took the stripes
of both!

DE MORTUIS

They read upon a tomb in Samarcand,
If I were living, none were glad thereof.
This legend two alone can understand, —
Who loves no more — who is forgot by love.

AN AUTOGRAPH

He wrote upon the sand his autograph;
A little wave erased it with a laugh.

DISTINCTION

When past Oblivion's pale the throng upstarts,
Seek we the shade and a few quiet hearts.

A RHYME OF LIFE

Dost think it was for nothing that "to-morrow"
The Muse from oldest time has linked with
"sorrow"?

THE DERELICT

He drifts along as his lost Genius becks,
A wreck of Fate, and fated source of wrecks.

OPINION

In gulf — or pool — their fathom-line they sink,
And still they strive to think what they *do* think.

NODDING CRITICS

You saw good Homer nod? But I saw you;
Asleep you were! (Some say that I slept, too.)

IV

SONNETS AND EPILOGUE

THE WINE OF LUSITANIA

TO S. R. E.

Oh, who would storm with foolish half-fledged wings
The Heaven of Song, and in one morning spend
His lease of flight and music, and descend
To be henceforth with dumb, unbuoyant things, —
The scourge proud rashness from Apollo brings!
Let me be mute an age, and take for friend
Strong Life — so may I offer at the end
One strain dew-freshened from Pierian springs,
That shall not other be than as the wine
Swart Lusitania for her kings doth shed:
Its clusters, hoarding up the rich sunshine,
Know not the groaning press nor peon's tread,
But, full ripe globe on globe, their sweets resign
In slow distillment, slender, but divine!

PASADA MAÑANA

Now I discern a day unrisen yet —
As they who dwell in valleys may behold

The sun's bright feet on crag and parapet
Ere he o'erlays the lowland streams with gold!
Now I discern the summers that shall be,
The flowers beneath the winter-chastened turf,
The leaves still furled within the hoary tree,
The birds that sport in southern sun and surf!
What voices break from out the after-times!
I hear them (I that soon am senseless clod):
What stirs in busy marts, what morning chimes
In cities of new men and shrines of God!
And yet these all shall pass, shall fall, in turn:
A morrow past to-morrow I discern!

THE BITTER-SWEET OF SPRING

I

Now is the tender moment of the year
When bards of Hellas feigned the sweet return
Of Ceres' daughter from the Night's sojourn.
Feigned? Nay, she comes apace — she now is here,
Soft-sobbing, while her mother's arms ensphere;
Soft-laughing, childlike striving to relearn
Familiar words forgot in Orcus stern, —
While with her, sobs and laughs her mother dear.
Hence for us also doth the season weave
A subtile weft of heartache and fine joy:

We walk in gladness, yet some fond annoy
From unlaid sorrow to our steps will cleave ;
But when we, single-hearted, turn to grieve,
Lo ! some new beauty springs with quick decoy !

II

With pain of joy doth vernal nature thrill,
And takes its mood, sad-memoried, soothed, or wild,
From ever-changing moods of Ceres' child :
Her groping thought, — the mists that valleys fill ;
Her kindling life, — the glow upon the hill
In mid-days when the quivering air is mild ;
Her wistful glance, — when golden suns have smiled
Good-night on green fields stretching lone and still.
Anemone and cress rain-swept and blurred,
Stirrings and sighings of the grass-blade frail,
Carols that wake among bare boughs, and fail,
The tree-toad's twilight cry, ere comes the bird : —
Tokens of her thou hast both seen and heard,
And canst thou longer doubt the old Greek tale !

III

Thou knowest not I love thee — no, not yet,
More than the plains in heavy darkness drowned
Forecast that cheerful Day will flow around,
And to the ancient Night his limit set.

Thou knowest not thou hast me in thy debt,
More than this pallid winter-guarded ground
Forecasts the shower from April cloud unbound,
The drinking grass-blade and the violet.
Thou knowest not I love thee! Yet no less
Than as the Day and Springtide hither tend
Do I with unperceivèd motion bend
My gradual steps toward thee; nor canst thou guess
How I, for all delaying, will but bless
Thy life with richer service in the end.

IV

Deep in the heart of savage Winter lies,
Untracked and fair, a realm of halcyon dreams.
Limpid and free run on the talking streams;
With bloomy drift the stooping tree replies.
Ofttimes a wood-sprite in a thrush's guise
Eludes all search, though near its rapture seems;
And morning meadows, where the dew yet gleams,
Look heavenward, vivid with a thousand eyes.
Last night Sleep bore me to this charm-wrapt place,
Where thou (supreme in joy and peace alway)
Wast gathering cool white florets born of May.
Of these one dazzled with so strange a grace
That I besought thee tell its name and race.
Thou smiling saidst, "It is the Eye of Day."

V

Bright days are with us, lengthened and serene.
The clods grow mellow, and the forest hath
Its budding pleasures ; yet of Winter's scath
Some drear memorials here and there are seen.
For, though the wind no more breathes frosty-keen,
It often floats the old leaves in our path,
Or sighs along some unreaped aftermath,
To mind us of the rigor that hath been.
O thou my Joy, Spring of my Wondrous Year!
Forgive, if in thy presence aught of grief
Remain from that dead time ere thou wast here.
Now, surely, such gainsaying shall be brief;
For thou wilt set my feet where flower and leaf
And soft new sward blot out the stubble sere.

DEEP-SEA SPRINGS

Thou readest how in lands of tropic heat,
When lake and river fail and thirst is sore,
The parchèd dweller by the burning shore
Dives, while the sultry tides above him meet,
And fills a leathern sack from waters sweet
That, voiceless and unseen forevermore,
Unblending with the brackish current pour
From some remote spring-gladdened mountain-seat.

Thou readest too my heart? In fate allied
To that poor diver of the salt-sea waste;
Finding all else but leaves a bitter taste,
Recourse it hath not, in the whole world wide,
O Love! save where, deep, silent, and untraced,
The freshening waters flow beneath the world's
faint tide.

TIME

Time is no rushing torrent, dark and hoarse,
As thou hast heard from bards and sages old;
Sit here with me (wouldst thou the truth behold),
And watch the current hour run out its course.
See how without uproar or sullen force
Glides this slim shadowy rill of atom gold,
Which, when the last slow guileful grain is told,
Forever is returned unto its source!
This is Time's stream, by whose repeated fall
Unnumbered fond ones, since the world was new,
Loitered as we, unwarned of doom the while;
Wouldst think so slender stream could cover all?
But as we speak, some eddy draws us, too —
Meseems dim grow thine eyes and dim thy smile!

MIST

I

Go, search the vasty reaches of the Mist,
O Fancy! Haply to thy favored eyes
Green valleys may unbosom, hills may rise,
Where only plains have been. — Go lightly, hist!
Lurk yonder where the King of Elves keeps tryst,
In soft rose-gardens where the dew ne'er dries;
Find out who listens to his fluttering sighs,
Whose wayward lovely lips are deftly kissed! . . .
Now, more adventurous courses thou shalt beat:
This path shall bring thee where the Wilis lead
Their vacant dance with ever wilder speed;
And this shall bring thee to that dim retreat
Where sit the Fates, and measures dark repeat,
While they the driven wheel and spindle heed.

II

Unto a secret charge in nature list:
Oh, not of Evening, bowed on votive pyre,
And not of Morn, who with an urn of fire
Paceth the hills, a blessed votarist,
And laveth them with molten amethyst, —
Oh, not of Evening nor of Morn inquire
Where throbs the heart of passion and desire,
But seek it in the white enchanted Mist,

Most like some human heart that would suppress
Its long-time trouble, yet the blanchèd cheek,
The veilèd eye, the lips too tremulous weak
To ease the loaden spirit of its stress,
Shall the supreme of passion show not less
Than if that eye glanced fire, those lips should
speak!

THE ROOF-TREE

Now, would that I might speak by breezy leaves,
Or words from human lips thou couldst divine!
For if I knew thy speech, or thou knew mine,
I 'd tell thee, guardian of my roof and eaves,
What influence from thee my life receives,
When wave in green those sinewy arms of thine,
When stripped thou standest at the Shearer's sign,
Or when the stealthy night-frost's chisel cleaves.
Thy wordless counsel makes me glad and strong:
Thou showest, howe'er wild the winters be,
That they can do a rooted power no wrong;
And thou in summer's pleasance teachest me
To make my heart the covert for a throng
Of singing-birds, — as thou dost, joyous Tree!

THE GARDEN ON THE PANE

Where is another garden like to this,
So rank, so fine, so hardy, yet so fleeting,

Where all delights of every zone are meeting?
For here the palm-tree of the oasis,
The heaven-pointing fir thou shalt not miss,
Or fruited arbor-vine and orchard sweeting,
Or bees to make white honey for thine eating,
Or Psyche fluttering from the chrysalis!
Ay, where is there a garden like to this?
Here tenderest blooms look up when storms are beating,
And lift their lips to take the East's bluff greeting;
Nor ever droops the bee, though sleet may hiss.
Here comes no grief, save from the Sun's fond kiss,
And from the amorous South-wind's tearful cheating.

ANTEROS

I

My love, thou madest me to love thee first.
Then thought of thee and thine approach was dear
And cordial as the wind that winnows clear
The orient verge, in sad sea-vapors mersed,
Ere Guido's vision on the dark world burst.
Thy presence was the Morning, far and near
With rainbow glamour lighting every tear
The flower uplifts to slake the sunbeam's thirst.

My love, my love, thou makest me to fear!
And now my soul, like some low intervale
Where the cold damps of night a mist exhale,
Before thee lies, blind all its paths and drear.
And wilt thou more? — despise this drooping cheer,
When thou it is hast caused my heart to fail!

II

Thou makest me to fear, — to move in dread,
As one who skirts a wood where every branch
Conceals an archer swift and fain to launch
A noiseless hest to join the unnumbered dead.
Ah, see! Thou hast thy mordant heart so fed
With bitter doubt of mine that, if I blanch
At fancy I could prove to thee unstanch,
Thou deemest me by guilt disquieted!
Thou mad'st me love, and mightst have bid me show
With open vein how quick, how warm, how red,
The currents leap at Life's leal fountain-head.
Thou mak'st me fear, and therein wrongest so
Thyself and Love, thou needs must have me foe
Till thou thy dark ally, Distrust, have sped.

III

If still thou love, thou knowest, — thou alone!
But if thy purpose bindeth thee to dwell
Intrenched within a winter citadel,
Whence frost and brume and flawing storm are blown,

Lo ! mine ally I bring from near Love's throne, —
His foster-brother whose great heart doth swell
At wrongs done Love ; whose instant arm doth
fell
All prideful doubt in brooding darkness grown !
Thus sieged, it may be that thou wilt dispel
The unnative clouds, and, morning-bright, emerge :
But if thou wilt not, I no longer urge
Thy laggard dawn ; but, bidding thee farewell,
I follow Love heard as a wave-swung bell
When light is gone and wildly runs the surge.

IN MEMORY

L. T. L.

I

THINK not of that wild tempest of the brain
That, bearing early darkness on its wing,
Shut down on her ere life's mid-journeying :
Madness to her clear soul was not germane,
But came from far, as to Italia's plain
Those blasts that out of arid Barca spring,
And for a season dearth and faintness bring,
But gone, the Land wears her old smile again.
No, no ; think not of her, thus scourged and cum-
bered,
But as ye oft beheld her long ago,
Roaming through fields as fair as Italy's own

(And dearer loved) — a flower 'mid flowers unnumbered,
Or where smooth waves of June-grass round her flow,
In sunshine space, happy though all alone.

II

Once a sweet lady of a Southern race
Rode scathless through a northern wild where dwelt
A remnant of uncouth and savage Celt.
At sight of her so fearless lovely face,
Unbent was many a knitted brow and base;
Some made the symbol of the cross, some knelt,
For every rugged heart a memory felt
Of the Mild Mother in her pictured grace.
So wert thou in this world, spirit all rare!
A soft bright passer through a way too rude,
Filling all eyes with thine unconscious share
Of a Supernal Beauty still pursued,
Still drawing us, until we greet it where,
Full-orbed, it shines in heavenly plenitude.

AUTUMN AND THE AFTERGLOW

I

When the far woods a misty veil assume
(The sun being gone), and stand in solemn hush,
To the pale heavens comes a heightened bloom;

Slowly it gathers — an ethereal flush,
Blending the summer rose, the oriole's breast,
Wine, fruit, and leafage touched to various flame,
The candle-light of home far seen and blest,
And flower-like, gem-like splendors without name.
This is the reminiscent Afterglow,
Day's riches told upon the bourn of Night:
So I, Life's pilgrim, ere from hence I go,
Resigning the sweet heritage of light,
Would view in the soul's west the pageant train
Of what hath been, but shall not be again.

II

As dies the Day so dies the blessed Year,
Through dreamful languishment and mystic trance,
With murmur-voiced adieu, and wistful glance
Still deepening as the shadow draws more near.
What is it wanders with the thistle's sphere,
Or darts before the gossamer's shimmering lance,
Or mingles with the lost leaves' elfin dance,
Or, birdlike, flutes along the upland sere?
The host of those departing! Yet, a while
They linger, and, with sweet remembering,
Catch back the tender prattle of the Spring,
The full heart-throb of Summer and her smile.
Good-by, fond Day, good-by, regretful Year!
Ye go — the Night and Winter tarry here!

III

Sometimes in the late Year will come a day
Careless that Winterward the season turns:
Large dew replaces frost, the bees yet stray,
And, softened by the mist, the rare leaf burns
Pale rose, and tender green, and amber, too —
As though the time of bursting buds were near!
The breath of Spring is on the lingering dew,
Yet ever runs abroad a whisper sere.
So to the spirit's lot it may befall —
Some dream of Youth deceives — brief while deceives!
My God! From me the Spring is farther gone
Than in this hour the migrant bird whose call
Through alien lands sounds sweetly at dark dawn,
While silence deepens round our vacant eaves.

A LONE SOUL SPEAKS

There is no tree of yonder greenwood band
But hath a comrade, than the rest more near,
To whom it utters all the wind's wild cheer,
Communing through blithe leaves, with touches bland.
Flower leans on flower, as its soft leaves expand,
And every spear of grass some neighbor spear
Saluteth, mingling glistening tear with tear,
When zephyr and the dew refresh the land.

So claims the human spirit one more near
To whom it shows its counsels brave or weak;
If none be near, then will the full heart call
Impassioned, on the common heart of all;
And when, thus burdened, a Lone Soul shall speak,
The world, — the world at large, will lend an ear!

TO THOSE COMING

WHO are ye far coming, unseen and unheard,
yet all-potent your sway —
Less than a shadow, yet throwing your shadow
far back on our way?
For whose eyes are the life-tinted canvas, the
bronze and the marble bust,
When alike the portrayed and portrayer are
gone to be dust of the dust?
For whom is the toil of the sage sweeping heaven
and earth in his glance?
For whom is the verse of the bard, be it love, be
it war that he chants?
For whom is all Art save the song that fleets on
the wave of the air,
And the speech of the player that feigneth all
things between hope and despair?
To whom (wherever ye turn) shall our suppliant
hands be upcast,
With proffer supine of the trophies and triumphs
all time has amassed?

Who are ye that never have known us, and yet
shall our story record,
That have heard not accused nor accuser — and
yet shall bestow the award!
Who are ye whose breath we entreat, when our
own shall be forfeit and fled,
To speak as we speak of the silent who dwell in
the realms of the Dead?
Declare, are ye Gods, or the favored of Gods,
that we wait your decree,
Are ye nearer the wondrous Beginning, — more
skilled in its secret than we,
Or nearer the End of the race, through the infi-
nite tract of the years —
Are ye other than we, whose food and whose
drink are seasoned with tears?

No! not for you will I live but my own, who
dwell in To-day!
Their joy shall be mine and their grief, I will
hang on the word they shall say;
Dearer their accents germane than the alien
echoes ye wake;
Least service for them shall be sweeter than
kingdoms subdued for your sake!
I am even as one of a crew on an isle of the sea
cast away,
Whose springs and wild fruits unnumbered their
thirst and their hunger allay;
Where the wave from the east bears the rose of
the morn to the sands at their feet,

And at noon in the sylvan crown of the isle they
are sheltered from heat;
Thence down through the meadows unsown,
where are none to reap or to bind,
They pass in the afternoon, plucking the flowers
of the sun and the wind,
And come where the wave from the west breaks
the evening star on the sands.
So they live, nor repine that they may not set
sail and behold other lands;
And as one of their number might trace, as a pas-
time or summer-day task,
A legend — a song — of that isle, and, sealing
the scroll in a flask,
Might send it adrift on the waves and reck not
what fate was in store —
If it come where men read or sink in the sands
of a barbarous shore;
So a record, perchance, will I trace, and cast it
abroad on the tide.
If it never shall reach you, content with mine
own in To-day I abide;
If it come by the wandering flood to your hands,
and ye read it aright,
Ye shall pity not us who are gone, but shall envy
our full delight,
And chide the great deep that has risen and
hidden forever from view
The beautiful isle that received and sheltered
our castaway crew.

SURSUM CORDA

Up and rejoice, and know thou hast matter for revel, my heart!
Up and rejoice, not heeding if drawn or undrawn be the dart
Last winged by the Archer whose quiver is full for sweeter than thou,
That yet will sing out of the dust when the ultimate arrow shall bow.

Sing thou! for now thou mayst sing, though slender thy note were, and harsh;
Sing as but once sings the swan borne down the loved stream of his marsh!
In this thou hast matter for revel, — that, sick and undone as thou wast
(Thy wit and thy will in curious mazes frustrate and lost),
Emerged art thou now, neither darkling, nor blinded by fullness of light;
Struck through are the fetters of law by a Freedom unseen, in the height.

Now thou couldst laugh, nor thy laughter with sinister burden be fraught;
Now thou couldst weep where once were the eye-strings tensioned with drought;
Now thou couldst bless and God-speed, without bitterness bred in thine heart,

Loves, that, outworn and time-wasted, were fain
from thy lodge to depart:
Though dulled by their passing, thy faith, like a
flower upfolded by night,
New kindness should quicken again, as a flower
feels the touch of new light.
Ay, now thou couldst love, undefeated, with ar-
dor instinct from pure Love, —
Warmed from a sun in the heavens that knows
not beneath nor above,
Nor distance its patience to weary, nor substance
unpierced by its ray.
Though world-shadows utter abroad the figment
of night and of day!
So should not error and evil enchain thee a
mourner for aye;
Now couldst thou pity, and smile, where once but
the scourge thou wouldst lay;
Now to thyself couldst show mercy, and up from
all penance arise,
Knowing there runneth abroad a chastening flame
from the skies.

Doubt not thou hast matter for revel, for once
thou wouldst cage thee in steel,
And, wounded, wouldst seek out the balm and
the cordial cunning to heal;
But now thou hast knowledge more sovran, more
kind, than leech-craft can wield:
Never Design sent thee forth to be safe from the
scath of the field,

But bade thee stand bare in the midst, and offer
free way to all scath
Piercing thee inly — so only might Song have an
outgoing path.
And now thou couldst sing — not as once, in one
voice, an iterant strain,
But sounding all measures organic, unstinted of
pleasure or pain!
Thou fearest no more, avoidest no more a fiat
decreed,
Nor hopest thou fearingly, reaching forth impo-
tent hands for thy meed.
Now thou couldst love — couldst sing — holding
measureless cheer in thy gift,
For such as ungirded and baffled sit down 'mid
Time's wreckage and drift.

But now 't is not thine to bestow, to abide, or be
known in thy place;
Withdraweth the voice into silence, dissolveth the
form and the face.
Death — Life thou discernest! Enlarged as thou
art, thy ground thou must shift!
Love over-liveth. Throb thou forth quickly.
Heart, be uplift!

I SHALL REMEMBER

I

In the dim meadows flecked with asphodel
I shall remember!
I shall not quaff
The waters of the immemorial well,
That darkly laugh, throwing oblivious spell.
The cup of memory I shall bear, shall drain
Again — again — again —
Down to the draff!
I shall remember.

II

I shall not drink the waters of that well;
I shall remember!
Far from all mirth
I will make glad, make mad, the souls that dwell
In pale content obscure; for I will tell
It is the Earth, once theirs they blindly seek
In search too weak, too weak, —
It is the Earth!
I shall remember.

III

In the dim meadows flecked with asphodel
I shall remember!
Fadeless it blows.
All sweetest blooms with Earth and Change do dwell,

And in their greeting mingle a farewell, —
More dear because they droop, they fade, they pass.
The rose of love, alas!
The rose, the rose
I shall remember.

IV

I shall not drink the waters of that well;
I shall remember,
And weary not
Crying, "Ye shadowy dancers in the dell,
And ye whose shadowy arms do but compel
A shadowy foe, — this is not mirth, not strife!
This is not life, not life!
Have *ye* forgot?"
I shall remember.

Recordor

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